

In the Claims:

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1. (Currently Amended) A method for sharing costs associated with toll calls comprising:
receiving a request for toll sharing from a call initiator ordinarily responsible for paying a toll associated with a toll call;
receiving proposed toll sharing parameters from the call initiator;
initiating the toll call to a call recipient;
informing the call recipient of the proposed toll sharing parameters;
receiving a decision from the call recipient as to whether the toll sharing parameters are accepted; and
 - a) providing toll sharing parameters for a toll call between parties;
 - b) receiving toll call indicia sufficient to determine costs associated with a toll call; and
 - c) if the toll sharing parameters are accepted, apportioning the costs for the toll call between the parties call initiator and the call recipient based on the toll sharing parameters.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising generating billing information for each call participant party including apportioned charges for the toll call.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein receiving proposed toll sharing parameters the providing step further includes receiving information sufficient to define the toll sharing parameters for the toll calls between the call initiator and the call recipient parties and defining the toll sharing parameters to apply to the toll calls between the call initiator and the call recipient parties.
4. (Cancelled).
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[4]] 1 further comprising wherein the determining step further includes determining if the toll call is between a call initiator and

~~a call recipient parties for which the toll sharing parameters are pre-defined defined such that only costs for calls between the parties are apportioned.~~

6. (Canceled).
7. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring after the toll sharing parameters are defined.
8. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring within a defined period of time.
9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring on or within at least one of the group consisting of time of day, day, week, month, and year.
10. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to at least one portion of the toll call.
11. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to at least one portion of the toll call having a defined length.
12. (Canceled).
13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12 1 further comprising facilitating interaction with the call originator originating one of the parties to provide the toll sharing parameters for the toll call.
14. (Canceled).

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12 1 wherein the request is a code dialed by the call originator originating one of the parties configured to initiate cost sharing for the toll call.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12 1 wherein the request is made via operator assistance to initiate cost sharing for the toll call.

17. (Canceled).

18. (Currently Amended) A system for sharing costs associated with toll calls comprising a control system adapted to:

receive a request for toll sharing from a call initiator ordinarily responsible for paying a toll associated with a toll call;

receive proposed toll sharing parameters from the call initiator;

initiate the toll call to a call recipient;

inform the call recipient of the proposed toll sharing parameters;

receive a decision from the call recipient as to whether the toll sharing parameters are accepted; and

a) provide toll sharing parameters for a toll call between parties;

b) receive toll call indicia sufficient to determine costs associated with a toll call; and

c) if the toll sharing parameters are accepted, apportion the costs for the toll call between the call initiator and call recipient parties based on the toll sharing parameters.

19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 18 wherein said control system is further adapted to generate billing information for each call participant party including apportioned charges for the toll call.

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 18 wherein said control system is further adapted to receive information sufficient to define the toll sharing parameters for the toll

calls between the call initiator and the call recipient parties and define the toll sharing parameters to apply to the toll calls between the call initiator and the call recipient parties.

21. (Canceled).
22. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 24 wherein said control system is further adapted to determine if the toll call is between the call initiator and the call recipient parties for which the toll sharing parameters are pre-defined defined such that only costs for calls between the parties are apportioned.
23. (Canceled).
24. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring after the toll sharing parameters are defined.
25. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring within a defined period of time.
26. (Original) The system of claim 25 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring on or within at least one of the group consisting of time of day, day, week, month, and year.
27. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to at least one portion of the toll call.
28. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to at least one portion of the toll call having a defined length.
29. (Canceled).

30. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 29 18 wherein said control system is further adapted to facilitate interaction with the call originator originating one of the parties to provide the toll sharing parameters for the toll call.

31. (Canceled).

32. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 29 18 wherein the request is a code dialed by the call originator originating one of the parties configured to initiate cost sharing for the toll call.

33. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 29 18 wherein the request is made via operator assistance to initiate cost sharing for the toll call.

34. (Canceled).

35. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium including software for sharing costs associated with toll calls, the software comprising computer instructions to:

receive a request for toll sharing from a call initiator ordinarily responsible for paying a toll associated with a toll call;

receive proposed toll sharing parameters from the call initiator;

initiate the toll call to a call recipient;

inform the call recipient of the proposed toll sharing parameters;

receive a decision from the call recipient as to whether the toll sharing parameters are accepted;

a) provide toll sharing parameters for a toll call between at least two parties;

b) receive toll call indicia sufficient to determine costs associated with a toll call; and

e) apportion the costs for the toll call between the call initiator and call recipient parties based on the toll sharing parameters.

36. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 35 further comprising instructions to generate billing information for each call participant party including apportioned charges for the toll call.

37. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 35 wherein the instructions to receive proposed toll sharing parameters further comprises comprising instructions to receive information sufficient to define the toll sharing parameters for toll calls between the call initiator and the call recipient parties and define the toll sharing parameters to apply to toll calls between the call initiator and the call recipient parties.

38. (Canceled).

39. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 38 35 further comprising instructions to determine if the toll call is between the call initiator and the call recipient parties for which the toll sharing parameters are pre-defined defined such that only costs for calls between the parties are apportioned.

40. (Canceled).

41. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 37 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring after the toll sharing parameters are defined.

42. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 37 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring within a defined period of time.

43. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 42 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to any toll calls occurring on or within at least one of the group consisting of time of day, day, week, month, and year.

44. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 37 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to at least one portion of the toll call.

45. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 37 wherein the toll sharing parameters are defined to apply to at least one portion of the toll call having a defined length.

46. (Cancelled).

47. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 46 35 further comprising instructions to facilitate interaction with the call originator ~~originating one of the parties~~ to provide the toll sharing parameters for the toll call.

48. (Cancelled).

49. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 46 wherein the request is a code dialed by the call originator ~~originating one of the parties~~ configured to initiate cost sharing for the toll call.

50. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 46 wherein the request is made via operator assistance to initiate cost sharing for the toll call.

51-53. (Cancelled).